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LETTER DATED 25 SEPTEMBER 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES OF CHINA, FRANCE, THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

We have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the statement issued after the meeting which you had with our Ministers for Foreign Affairs on 25 September 1997. We should be grateful if you would have it circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) QIN Huasun
Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations

(Signed) Alain DEJAMMET
Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations

(Signed) Sergei V. LAVROV
Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations

(Signed) John WESTON
Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations

(Signed) Bill RICHARDSON
Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations

Annex

Statement issued on 25 September 1997 by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the five permanent members of the Security Council following a meeting with the Secretary-General

1. On 25 September 1997, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the five permanent members met the Secretary-General of the United Nations, H.E. Mr. Kofi A. Annan. H.E. Mr. Qian Qichen, Vice Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs, represented the People's Republic of China; H.E. Mr. Hubert Vedrine, Minister of Foreign Affairs, France; H.E. Mr. Yevgueni Primakov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Russian Federation; H.E. Mr. Robin Cook, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and H.E. Ms. Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State, the United States of America.

2. The Ministers reaffirmed their strong support of the United Nations and welcomed the efforts by the Secretary-General to improve the efficiency of the Organization and to promote the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. In particular they reaffirmed their commitment to achieving early and practical results in the renewal of the United Nations and its adaptation to new world realities. The Ministers welcomed the momentum in favour of substantial reform of the United Nations in all major activities of the Organization. In this context they considered as highly opportune the Secretary-General's report "Renewing the United Nations: a Programme for Reform", suggesting a whole set of measures designed to revitalize the United Nations system. They expressed support for his effort and reiterated their commitment to participate actively and constructively in a considered debate on the Secretary-General's proposals during the fifty-second session of the General Assembly with a view to advancing the reform in a timely manner in order to ensure higher quality, effectiveness and better relevance of the United Nations activities.

3. The Ministers reaffirmed their support for the reform of the Security Council through the enlargement of its membership. They also expressed support for additional steps to strengthen the effectiveness and increase the transparency and efficiency of the work of the Council.

4. Emphasizing the importance of the efforts made by the United Nations to maintain international peace and security, the Ministers stressed the primary responsibility of the Security Council in this respect. They reaffirmed that the Organization must further improve its ability to act quickly and effectively to address threats to international peace and security. They indicated their determination to continue to help develop the capacities of the United Nations in preventing and resolving conflicts including through conduct of peacekeeping operations. The Ministers also recognized the need for effective and properly coordinated measures of post-conflict peace-building which should complement efforts at peacemaking and peacekeeping, with due regard to respective prerogatives of the Security Council and the General Assembly. They also welcomed the growing cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining stability and security in accordance with Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter.

5. The Ministers stressed the need for the international community to continue to reinforce its efforts in the field of disarmament and to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

They reaffirmed the urgent need for universal adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. They indicated that the signing of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is a qualitatively new stage in the efforts to achieve non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament. They reaffirmed their support for the immediate commencement and early conclusion of negotiations on a treaty to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. They also reaffirmed the importance they attach to the fact that the Convention on Chemical Weapons entered into force. They stressed the importance of universal adherence to the Convention on Conventional Weapons and to the 1996 Protocol on Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices. They also welcomed the negotiations under way on a legally binding protocol to strengthen effectiveness of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. They welcome the 15 May approval by the IAEA Board of Governors of a Model Protocol on strengthening safeguards and urge States to complete and bring into force additional Protocols to their safeguards agreements.

6. The Ministers reaffirmed their determination to combat terrorism in all forms, wherever and by whomever committed. They emphasized the necessity to intensify the fight against terrorism at national level and to strengthen effective international cooperation in this field, in particular within the United Nations. In this regard the Ministers stressed the need to oppose concessions to terrorist demands and to deny hostage-takers any benefits from their acts. They are committed to ensure that terrorists are brought to justice. They undertook to continue diplomatic efforts to promote universal accession and adherence to the basic international anti-terrorist conventions. They welcomed the ongoing efforts to adopt effective and legitimate means and measures, including new international instruments, in order to counter the terrorist threat.

7. The Ministers expressed deep concern at the persistence of conflicts, most of them within rather than between States, in many parts of Africa. They welcomed the efforts of the United Nations, alongside the Organization of African Unity and subregional organizations and arrangements, to promote peace and stability and to settle conflicts by peaceful and political means. They also stressed the importance they attach to assistance to African countries in their efforts to enhance their capacities for peacekeeping and conflict prevention.

The Ministers expressed concern at the recent increase of tension and destabilizing actions in Angola, in particular the failure of UNITA to comply with its obligations under the Lusaka Protocol. Additional measures imposed by the Security Council against UNITA in resolution 1127 will be in effect on 30 September unless irreversible and concrete steps are taken by UNITA to fulfil its obligations under the Lusaka Protocol.

The Ministers underlined the importance of a peaceful democratic transition, national reconciliation, economic renewal and improvement of the

humanitarian conditions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and believed it was important to assist the new authorities in these areas. They called for cooperation between the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the relevant United Nations bodies including the mission sent by the Secretary-General to investigate alleged violations of international humanitarian law.

The Ministers remained deeply concerned about the situation in Sierra Leone. They supported the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to reach by peaceful means a prompt resolution of the crisis in this country with the early restoration of the democratically elected Government.

A deep concern was expressed regarding the situation in the Republic of the Congo. The Ministers called upon the parties to the conflict to halt all acts of violence immediately and emphasized their full support for the international mediation currently under way. The Ministers recalled that the Security Council intends to take a decision on the establishment of a peacekeeping operation on the basis of the recommendations made by the Secretary-General.

The Ministers continued to be concerned by the situation in Burundi and called on all parties to support fully international and regional mediation efforts under way to resolve this conflict peacefully.

They emphasized their appreciation of the regional efforts for facilitating the return to peace and security in the Central African Republic.

8. The Ministers expressed their support for the activities of the Security Council, the Secretary-General and the Member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States and other interested States to promote a comprehensive settlement of the conflicts in both Abkhazia, Georgia, and Tajikistan. They expressed their appreciation for the Russian Federation's efforts, as well as for the close cooperation between the United Nations missions (UNOMIG and UNMOT) and the CIS peacekeeping forces and for the contribution made by the Russian Federation to the CIS forces. The Ministers also welcomed the signing on 27 June 1997 in Moscow of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan which constitutes a significant breakthrough and opens the way to national reconciliation through peaceful means. They called upon the international community to contribute to its effective implementation. They also welcomed the efforts of the Co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Conference to promote a resolution of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict.

The Ministers called for concerted efforts to implement the decisions of the Regional Conference to Address the Problems of Refugees and Displaced Persons in the CIS Countries and relevant Neighbouring States, held in Geneva in May 1996.

9. The Ministers expressed their concern at the continued fighting in Afghanistan and called upon all Afghan parties to agree on an immediate ceasefire. They fully supported the efforts to facilitate national reconciliation in Afghanistan that can best be attained through intra-Afghan political negotiations under the United Nations auspices with active and

coordinated assistance of all countries concerned and welcomed the steps undertaken by the Secretary-General in this regard.

10. The Ministers reaffirmed that the status quo in Cyprus is unacceptable and urged both parties to make determined effort to achieve a comprehensive political settlement in accordance with the Security Council resolutions. They welcomed the launching by the Secretary-General of a sustained process of direct negotiations between the leaders of the two Cypriot communities with the aim of securing such a settlement and called upon them to commit themselves fully to this process of negotiations, to cooperate actively and constructively with the Secretary-General and his Special Adviser on Cyprus to that end, and stressed that full support of all concerned is necessary for this process to produce results. They took note of the intention of the European Union to start negotiations on the adhesion of Cyprus to the European Union and hoped that this would facilitate the search for a comprehensive political settlement.

11. The Ministers expressed their deep concern at the current difficulties in the Middle East peace process. They condemned vigorously acts of terrorism and violence aimed at destroying the peace process and expressed their deep outrage at the terrorist attacks in Jerusalem. They called upon all parties to implement in full commitments made under existing agreements and to refrain from actions that pre-empt the upcoming negotiations and worsen both the political and the economic situation in the Palestinian territories. They supported the continuing efforts of the co-sponsors of the peace process and also of the European Union and urged all parties to resume without delay negotiations in the framework of this process and on the basis of the agreements already reached and in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 and with the principle of 'land for peace'. The Ministers expressed their hope that the negotiations between Israel, Syria and Lebanon could resume soon on a mutually agreed basis and in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions. They urged all interested parties to avoid an escalation of violence and tension in south Lebanon and cooperate within the monitoring group.

12. The Ministers expressed their support for the United Nations Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency. They reaffirmed that Iraq must comply fully and unconditionally with its obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions. In this regard they also stressed the importance of full implementation of humanitarian resolutions 986 and 1111.

13. The Ministers welcomed the successful holding of municipal elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Ministers reaffirmed their support for the continued implementation of the Peace Agreement and for the establishment of a unified democratic, prosperous and multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina. They stressed the importance of intensified efforts by both entities towards fulfilment of their obligations under the Peace Agreement. The Ministers underlined that authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina must respect fully the right of refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes in a peaceful and orderly manner. They also recalled the obligation of States and entities under the Peace Agreement to cooperate fully with the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. The Ministers supported the role of the OSCE Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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14. The Ministers welcomed the achievements of UNTAES in implementing the Basic Agreement and stressed the importance of full and continued cooperation of the parties concerned with UNTAES. They also stressed that the commitment of the Government of Croatia is essential for the success of the peaceful reintegration of Eastern Slavonia.

15. The Ministers called for concerted efforts to tackle the causes of movements of refugees and displaced persons, and expressed their support for the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

16. The Ministers expressed their commitment to intensify efforts to combat transnational organized crime and all aspects of illicit trafficking of drugs, which represent a global threat to the safety of citizens, well-being of societies and institutions. They looked forward to the special session of the General Assembly in 1998 which would review the progress achieved in implementing the three United Nations drug control Conventions and identify priorities for the years ahead. The Ministers reaffirmed their determination to work actively to eliminate corruption and welcomed concrete steps undertaken by the United Nations in this field.

17. The Ministers recognized the favourable aspects in the world economic outlook. They underlined that the process of globalization was advancing rapidly and broadly. More openness and integration across the global economy creates opportunities for increased prosperity. At the same time the Ministers noted that globalization might create new challenges and potential risks for the development process. They also noted that some developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, are currently not benefiting from expanding world trade and greater flows of private capital. Increasing the capacity to respond to these trends requires sound domestic policies, as well as favourable international economic environment.

They reaffirmed that economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development. In this regard, they noted the important role played by the United Nations in assisting developing countries, in particular least developed countries, as well as countries in transition to a market economy.

The Ministers praised the adoption by the General Assembly last June of the Agenda for Development which is designed to contribute to revitalizing the United Nations role in international cooperation in the field of development. They emphasized the need to mobilize necessary political will to implement the provisions of the Agenda at all levels.

The Ministers noted the results of the nineteenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly which carried out a comprehensive assessment of progress achieved since the Earth Summit in Rio, and addressed sustainable development in a balanced and integrated way. They noted that the outcome of the special session could advance international agreement and promote necessary action in the area of sustainable development. Some positive results have been achieved, but the overall lack of progress is a cause for concern. An important result of the special session was a strong reaffirmation of political commitment

from all Member States and all major groups of civil society to sustainable development, as well as recognition of a key role to be played in this area by the United Nations in close partnership with all actors at various levels. The Ministers noted that the United Nations system should draw upon positive results of the special session and take them fully into account in further work on sustainable development, including the ongoing negotiations in the area of environment. The Ministers looked forward to swift implementation of the recommendations contained in the Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21 adopted by the nineteenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly.

18. The Ministers thanked the Secretary-General for this traditional exchange of views and believed that the continued close consultations between the Foreign Ministers of the five permanent members of the Security Council and the Secretary-General are very useful.